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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

INFORMATION

SECRET/SENSITIVE

April 4, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Phil Odeen

SUBJECT: Admiral Moorer on SLBM Construction Rates.

(no note attached when rec'd)

Admiral Moorer has sent you his recommendation on getting more SLBMs quickly. Not surprising, he comes out in support of an even more accelerated ULMS program!

He offers the following options:

-- Convert attack submarines.

-- Build new 640-class Poseidon SSBNs.

-- Maximize acceleration of ULMS.

Moorer's memorandum is not very clearly written and gives little information on options other than ULMS. He makes the following main points:

1. He strongly opposes converting attack submarines, since it would mean depending on "old technology," it would cripple our ASW capability and would "imbalance" the Fleet (whatever that means).

2. He opposes building new 640-class boats since they are "old technology." He states that only three to eight new 640-class boats could be built by the time of the first ULMS -- but that is based on the assumption that the program will be designed so that it won't affect the accelerated IOC of ULMS, i.e., 1978.

3. He argues that only ULMS is a "suitable and viable" option, asserting the surprising view (for the JCS) that the important thing "is not delivery rates" but the "existence of modern, ongoing systems."

4. Admiral Moorer provides possible high priority building rates for ULMS if we chose to go all out for more submarines. The current plan is to complete the first ULMS in 1978 with a subsequent rate of three per year through 1981. Moorer suggests the possibility of rates like 1-4-5-5 and 1-4-8-9-10. We still don't get the first operational ULMS until 1978 but the number built in subsequent years is greater.

You are aware of my views on this subject -- I believe the ULMS acceleration is a serious mistake. Aside from that, Moorer's memo is biased and may even be wrong:

1. Using the assumption that we cannot delay an ULMS IOC of 1978 as a basis for computing 640-class deliveries affects significantly the speed with which we could produce new 640s.

2. I have informal information that Moorer's memo implies far less capability to build 640-class submarines than we really have, even accepting his assumptions. For example:

-- If we continued CVAN 70, DLGN 40, SSNs and ULMS with 1978 IOC, we could still have about 20 additional 640-class boats by 1978.

-- Using only existing nuclear-qualified shipbuilding ways but stopping other programs (e.g., CVAN 70, DLGN 40 and SSNs), we could build 43-54 new 640-class boats by 1978.

These calculations assume unlimited funds, industrial priorities, etc. But they are some measure of what we could do if we felt it were essential. Unfortunately, it is exceedingly difficult to get a straight story on this question.

The nuclear submariners in the Navy will go to considerable length to "scuttle" the 640-class option, since they fear that any program which includes 640s ultimately threatens ULMS.

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

THM:Dfb
20 March 1972

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MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

Subj: SLBM/ULMS Construction Rates

1. It is possible to accelerate the addition of submarine-launched missiles to our current inventory of 656 (41 submarines) by means of the following options:

a. Convert operational SSNs of the 637/688-class to SSBNs (16 launchers).

b. Build new submarines which are exact copies of POSEIDON SSBN 640-class.

c. Maximize acceleration of ULMS program.

2. The following assumptions apply:

a. Highest priority and adequate and timely funding.

b. Continuation of POSEIDON conversion program.

c. Heavy impact on other shipbuilding programs unless additional ship construction facilities are provided.

d. Continuation of current ULMS program if Option 1.b. (640-class SSBN) construction selected.

e. 1 July 1972 authorization.

f. Only one option will be selected.

3. Comments:

a. I strongly recommend against Option 1.a (conversion of old SSNs). Not only would this option result in launching platforms with old technology or with limited capabilities but its adoption would seriously cripple our ASW capability against Soviet SLBMS and "unbalance" the Fleet.

b. Option 1.b. (Construction of new 640-class SSBNs) is feasible from a simple construction point of view; however, it is also considered to be a highly undesirable course of action

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since it would leave us with submarines designed from old technology. Since any new SLBM program we initiate today must provide us with an underwater weapons system well into the 21st Century, it should be the best that it is possible to build at time of launching. From 3 to 8 new 640-class SSBNs could be constructed by the time the first ULMS is delivered, depending upon priorities and efforts assigned.

c. Option 1.c. (construction of ULMS) is, in my opinion, the only suitable and viable option. It provides a weapon system with very significant advantages in performance and operational flexibility over anything available to either side. From a negotiation point of view the ULMS program, which can be further accelerated if desired, provides leverage which can be used to ensure approximate "equivalency" of offensive systems. From the "world image" point of view, the important thing is not delivery rates per se but, rather, the existence of a modern ongoing system. Enclosures (1) and (2) sets forth possible high priority annual building rates of 1-4-5-5-, and 1-4-8-9-10 respectively. Current plans call for an annual building rate of 1-3-3-3, with the IOC of the first ULMS submarine in 1978.

T. H. MOORER
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

ULMS
BUILDING RATE 1-4-5-5 (Note 1.)

SHIP NO.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
K L LAID	8/74	3/75	4/75	8/75	9/75	1/76	2/76	6/76	7/76	12/76	1/77	5/77	6/77	10/77	1 77
I NCH	6/76	12/76	1/77	5/77	6/77	10/77	11/77	3/78	4/78	9/78	10/78	2/79	3/79	7/79	8)
I IVERY	12/77	6/78	7/78	11/78	12/78	4/79	5/79	9/79	10/79	3/80	4/80	8/80	9/80	1/81	2 L
I .C.	10/78	12/78	1/79	5/79	6/79	10/79	11/79	3/80	4/80	9/80	10/80	2/81	3/81	7/81	8 L

N e 1. Assumes 4 Building Ways Each Yard

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Enclosure (1)

No Objection To Declassification in Full 2011/04/29 : LOC-HAK-22-3-22-9

BUILDING RATE 1-4-8-9-10

LAY KEEL* Month	8	3	4	8	9	1	1	1	2	6	7	11	12	1	2	3	5	6	8	9	11	12
Year	74	75	75	75	75	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	76	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
LAUNCH Month	6	1	2	6	7	11	2	2	12	4	5	9	10	2	12	1	3	4	6	7	9	10
Year	76	77	77	77	77	77	78	78	77	78	78	78	78	79	78	79	79	79	79	79	79	79
ELIVER Month	12	7	8	12	1	5	11	10	6	10	11	3	4	10	6	7	9	10	12	1	3	4
Year	77	78	78	78	79	79	79	79	79	79	79	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	81	81	81
.O.C. Month	10	1	2	6	7	11	5	4	12	4	5	9	10	4	12	1	3	4	6	7	9	10
Year	78	79	79	79	79	79	80	80	79	80	80	80	80	81	80	81	81	81	81	81	81	81

*Lay Keel dates are based on normal construction sequence. Should it be required for other purposes, the first ship keel could be laid as early as December, 1973.

NOTE 1: Assumes five (5) ULMS shipways available at each shipyard.

NOTE 2: Utilization of public facilities could result in obtaining a building rate of 1-4-8-9-10-9----. This has not been studied in detail. Longer construction periods at public yards are anticipated.

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